DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 303 UD 030 293

TITLE	Parent Involvement Program, 1992-93. Evaluation. OER Report.
INSTITUTION	New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, NY. Office of Educational Research.
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	58p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Office of Educational Research, Research Unit, Board of Education of the City of New York, 110 Livingston Street, Room 507, Brooklyn, NY 11201.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrators; Elementary Secondary Education; Outreach Programs; Parent Education; *Parent Participation; Parent Role; Parent School Relationship; *Pilot Projects; Program Evaluation; Surveys; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	*New York City Board of Education; Parent Involvement Program NY; Reform Efforts

ABSTRACT

The New York City Board of Education's Parent Involvement Program (PIP) was created in 1987 and the Office of Parent Involvement (OPI) was established in 1989. For the 1992-93 year, funds were distributed to 143 sites grouped into 3 cycles. Cycle 1 was a pilot program that paired previously funded and new projects, while Cycles 2 and 3 consisted of old and new projects sponsored by individual schools, districts, and high school superintendencies. The evaluation of the parent-involvement projects included visits to 21 program sites, evaluation of 59 surveys completed by program coordinators, interviews of 24 program coordinators, and administration of another survey to 150 parents. Evaluation data indicated that, although two-thirds of the sample projects started late, activities were well attended. Broad categories of activities were: (1) home-school partnerships; (2) outreach; (3) parent training; (4) development of community resources linkages; (5) parent-support services; and (6) 1-day special events. A majority of surveyed parents found the programs helpful. Recommendations are made for program continuation and improvement. Eleven tables present evaluation data. (Contains 12 references.) (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 378 303

OER Report

EVALUATION OF THE 1992-93 PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Tobias
NYC Public Schools.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EVALUATION OF THE 1992-93
PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Carol A. Gresser
President

Irene H. Impellizzeri
Vice President

Louis DeSario
Sandra E. Lerner
Luis O. Reyes
Ninfa Segarra-Vélez
William C. Thompson, Jr.
Members

Tiffany Raspberry
Student Advisory Member

Ramon C. Cortines
Chancellor

5/94

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

It is the policy of the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of New York not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or sex in its educational programs, activities, and employment policies, and to maintain an environment free of sexual harassment, as required by law. Inquiries regarding compliance with appropriate laws may be directed to Frederick A. Hill, Jr., Director (Acting), Office of Equal Opportunity, 110 Livingston Street, Room 601, Brooklyn, New York 11201; Telephone: (718) 935-3320

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND EVALUATION DESIGN

Since the publication of the report A Nation At Risk in 1983, parent involvement has become one of the most important components of the movement to reform the U.S. educational system. In many states, urban public schools are reaching out to families and communities in response to the multitude of educational, social, and economic problems faced by children and their families, and are establishing programs that promote a partnership between home and school.

The New York City Board of Education's Parent Involvement Program (PIP) was created in 1987 and the Office of Parent Involvement (OPI) was established in 1989. For the 1992-93 school year, a total of $1,039,865 was distributed to 134 sites grouped into three cycles. Cycle I was a pilot program which consisted of a pairing of previously funded and new projects. Cycle II and Cycle III consisted of both old and new projects sponsored by individual schools, districts, and high school superintendencies. The Office of Educational Research's (OER)* evaluation included visiting 21 project sites, receiving 59 coordinators' OER surveys, interviewing 24 program coordinators, and administering a survey to 150 parent participants.

PROGRAM FINDINGS

Data from OER's evaluation samples indicated that although two-thirds of the sample projects started late, the activities were well attended, with a range of from three to 160 parents per event. Most projects were conducted by experienced coordinators who almost always (92 percent of the coordinators surveyed) participated in program planning.

Six broad categories of parent involvement activities were implemented at the various evaluation sites: 1) home/school partnerships, 2) outreach, 3) parent training, 4) development of community resource linkages, 5) providing parent support services, and 6) one-day special events. Parent training activities were conducted at 98 percent of the sample sites. The least frequent activity was the development of community resource linkages, which was implemented at 35 of the 59 sample (59 percent) sites. Most of the activities occurred during the mornings before noon, and/or in the evenings.

---

* Previously known as the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA), the unit was renamed the Office of Educational Research (OER) in September 1993.

Parent survey data indicated that at least 53 percent of the parents voluntarily visited their children's schools and participated in school-related parent organizations. Moreover, 81 percent of the respondents said that they felt comfortable visiting the schools. A majority of parents (80 percent) stated that the program provided numerous types of assistance to them including parenting and homework assistance skills development.

According to coordinator survey data, elements that led to successful program implementation included:

- the coordinator's prior related work-experience, stated by 95 percent of the sample;
- the adaptation of the project to parents' needs, stated by 93 percent of the sample;
- having their principal's or superintendent's support, reported by 85 percent of the sample;
- using outreach workers who had the same ethnic/linguistic backgrounds, and were also parents, said by 83 percent of the sample; and
- having supportive parent organizations and school staff, said by 62 and 73 percent, respectively, of the sample.

On the other hand, coordinators' focus group interviews indicated that program implementation problems generally were related to:

- funding and budgeting, especially the lack of training and information about budgeting procedures;
- a sense of isolation, because of a lack of consistent contact with other coordinators;
- the timing of the grant award notification, because not knowing if the program would continue created a sense of insecurity;
- the need to eliminate some of the bureaucratic paper work;
- the need to start the program earlier in the school year; and
- the untimely release of program funds, which necessitated out-of-pocket spending.

In addition, Cycle I coordinators' focus group data indicated that some of the paired projects did not appear to have similar populations, needs, and concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings OER recommends that the Office of Parent Involvement:

- continue to implement the traditional PIP model as reflected in the 1992-93 Cycle I and II projects;
- revise the paired projects model to include verification of the similarity of parent populations, concerns, and needs just prior to project implementation;
- explore the possibility of releasing program funds in a more flexible manner and timely fashion;
- develop a mechanism where specific project coordinators can meet with a small group of their colleagues on an on-going basis to discuss implementation issues;
- work with OER to develop an assessment of parent and school-based participants' perceptions of the benefits and the impact of PIP; and
- work with OER to develop an evaluation of the educational impact of PIP on the New York City Board of Education's schools.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by the Research Unit of the Office of Educational Research (OER) of the Board of Education of New York City under the supervision of Mabel Payne, Manager of the unit. As with all reports coming from this unit, this one represents the contributions of many people.

The evaluation was coordinated by Carolle Charles, Ph.D. Additional OER staff that collected field data and assisted in data interpretation and preparation were: Adeola Joda, Pedro Mateu-Gelabert, Yves-Francois Pierre, Belinda Rowe, Catherine Scott, Pamela Wheaton, and Juilet Whittle. Renee Moseley helped with the word-processing and formatting of the text.

Valuable assistance for the evaluation research was provided by the Office of Parent Involvement. We wish to thank the Director, Edna Suarez-Colomba, and the Parent Involvement Program (PIP) Coordinator, Ali Calabrese. Thanks also go to the evaluation sample sites' PIP coordinators, principals, community school district personnel, teachers, and families who participated in PIP activities for their cooperation. They were most generous with their time and input.

Additional copies of this report are available from:

Ms. Mabel Payne
Office of Educational Research
Research Unit
New York City Board of Education
110 Livingston Street, Room 507
Brooklyn, New York 11201

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
I. INTRODUCTION	1
STUDY BACKGROUND	1
PROGRAM BACKGROUND	3
PROGRAM GOALS	3
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	5
SCOPE OF THIS REPORT	8
II. METHODOLOGY	9
EVALUATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	9
DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES	10
III. FINDINGS	14
GENERAL FEATURES OF THE 1992-93 PIP PROJECTS	14
CYCLE I PAIRING EXPERIMENT FINDINGS	25
CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENT EVALUATION SAMPLE	29
PIP's IMPACT ON PARENTS	29
IV. OER SITE VISIT OBSERVATIONS	33
HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES	33
PARENT TRAINING ACTIVITIES	37
SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	39
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	41
CONCLUSIONS	41
RECOMMENDATIONS	43
REFERENCES	44

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 1 Summary of 1992-93 PIP Sites and Funding Distributions by Cycle.....6

Table 2 1992-93 Evaluation Sample Site Distributed by Cycle, Type of Sponsor, and Borough Location.....11

Table 3 Summary of Projects' Years of Funding.....15

Table 4 Summary of Planned and Actual Parent Target Populations Served by the Evaluation Sample Projects.....17

Table 5 Evaluation Sample Coordinators' Job Titles.....18

Table 6 Types of Activities Implemented at the Sample Sites.....21

Table 7 Distribution of Parents by Language and Ethnicity.....30

Table 8 Summary of Sample Parents' Reasons for School Visits.....31

Table 9 Summary of the Types of Help Sample Parents Received from PIP.....31

Table 10 Summary of Sample Parents' PIP Activities.....32

Table 11 Summary of Evaluation Sample Site Visits.....34

I. INTRODUCTION

> "The nation's schools must do more to improve the education of all children, but schools cannot do this alone. More will be accomplished if families and communities work with children, with each other, and with their schools to promote successful students."*

STUDY BACKGROUND

After the April 1983 publication of the report titled A Nation at Risk**, a national trend to reform the U.S. educational system emerged. As part of this restructuring movement, many educators began to advocate vigorously for parent involvement in all educational efforts (Epstein 1987; Comer 1988; Seeley 1989; Davies, 1991; Hoover-Dempsey 1992; Fine 1993). The emphasis on involving parents in education has remained unabated till the present, but has evolved from a definition of parent involvement as a partnership with professional educators to a discussion where issues of empowerment and control are also being debated (Fine, 1993).

The body of literature that focuses on parent involvement as a partnership with the school presumes that any reform in education must recognize the responsibilities shared by families/parents, schools, and communities in the development and

---

* Joyce L. Epstein , Director of Center on Families, John Hopkins University. Center publication, 1992.

** The report was published by the National Commission On Excellence in Education, a panel appointed by the then U.S. Secretary of Education. The report's findings on the educational system were mostly negative, characterizing the situation as "a rising tide of mediocrity." The report made six recommendations related to content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, leadership, and support. KAPPAN, Special Issue, Vol 74, No. 8, April 1993.

education of children (Epstein 1987, Comer 1988). Moreover, for the last two decades, urban public schools in nearly every American city have been reaching out to families and communities in response to the multitude of educational, social, and economic problems faced by children and their families.

The literature contains reports on scores of parent involvement projects that have revolved around six major types of activities (Davies et al. 1992). These types of parent involvement activities are:

1. help for families--In these types of activities schools are redefined as community institutions that are: a) providing information, training, and social services referrals; b) fulfilling some of the non-academic needs of parents and children; and c) creating better home conditions for learning.

2. basic obligations of schools to communicate with their students' homes--Through different activities like announcements, calls, open houses, newsletters, hotlines, handbooks, etc., schools can intensify the relationship between their students' homes and parents/families.

3. volunteering--Schools induce parents to volunteer in schoo' activities like field trips, book fairs, fundraising, and library activities.

4. learning activities at home--Parents can participate in the educational process by helping their children with homework or other school tasks.

5. participation in decision-making processes--Through the organization of parents in various school associations and institutions like Parent Teacher Associations/Parent Associations (PTAs/PAs), Parents' Councils, and/or the School-Based Management/Shared Decision-Making (SBM/SDM) teams parents can become active in structuring their childrens' school experience.

6. collaboration of schools and parents/families with community groups--To better use available resources.

Although not all types of involvement lead directly to achievement gains for students, the current literature does suggest that each type of involvement leads directly to different important outcomes for schools, students, and families (Epstein 1993).

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Parent Involvement Program (PIP) was created in 1987 and Office of Parent Involvement (OPI) was established in 1989 in recognition of the vital role of parents in the education of children. The goal of the program is to enhance the home/school partnership and to optimize the parent/child relationship in order to maximize success for children.

The PIP started with some 30 sites in 1987, and had expanded to more than 90 sites by 1992. Some of the sites were located in schools, others were in the community at large. Activities in these sites were sponsored by individual schools, by districts, and by high school and special education superintendencies. In 1987, the city provided an $800,000 grant for PIP's first year; by 1992, grants totalling $982,594 were awarded to 92 programs. Grants for individual schools varied from $5,000 to $10,000, while districtwide and superintendency programs were allowed up to $40,000.

PROGRAM GOALS

A Request for Proposals (R.F.P.) issued by the Board of Education invited individual schools, districts, and superintendencies to submit proposals for a 1992-93 PIP. The

R.F.P. clearly stated that PIP's goals are to "identify and support programs that promote opportunities for parents to participate in the education of their children." It stipulated that the goals and objectives of these programs should be mutually determined by parents and school staff and that these goals and objectives must:

- promote maximum success for students;
- enable parents to better understand the educational system;
- provide opportunities for parents and school personnel to join together in the educational process;
- support outreach efforts to involve parents in the school life of their children;
- enable parents to recognize the need to optimize the parent/child relationship and develop skills to help their own children; and
- promote community involvement in the schools and the utilization of the enriched resources of the community.

The R.F.P also requested that programs reflect the multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual diversity of the student and parent populations of New York City. In addition, programs should implement specific activities in support of program goals and objectives. These activities were to include, yet not be limited to, such areas of parent involvement as:

1. developing effective home-school partnerships;
2. providing outreach services to parents;
3. skills training for parents to become active participants in the education of their children;
4. skills training for school staff to interact more effectively with parents; and,

5. developing resources for use by parents and staff.

The R.F.P. provided guidelines for planning, funding, budgeting, and record-keeping in site implementation. Moreover, the Office of Parent Involvement (OPI) offered a technical assistance workshop to help schools and districts prepare their proposals.

O.P.I established an evaluation group of around 90 people, divided into 18 teams, that reviewed all the applications. Members of these proposal review teams included:

- employees of the N.Y.C. public schools;
- community-based organization representatives;
- United Federation of Teachers (U.F.T.) members;
- parent representatives; and
- members of the Council of Supervisors and Administrators.

Program sites were implemented from November 1992 through June 1993, and funds were not allowed to be carried over into the 1993-94 school year.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

During the 1992-93 school year, Chapter 1/PCEN and Chapter 2 funds were provided to continue the development and implementation of PIP. The distribution of funds and the number and types of program sites are displayed in Table 1 below.

For the 1992-93 school year, a total of $1,039,865 was distributed to 134 projects grouped into three cycles. Cycle I was a pilot project which included 11 programs located at 24 sites. It consisted of a pairing of previously funded and new programs, two of which targeted six special education schools.

Table 1

Summary of 1992-93 Parent Involvement Program Sites and Funding Distributions by Cycle

Type of Site	Number of Programs	% of Total	Funding Amount	% of Total
CYCLE I				
Districtwide	0	--	$ --	--
Superintendencies	0	--	--	--
Citywide Special Education	6	25.0	57,502	29.0
Individual Schools*	18	75.0	143,154	71.0
TOTAL	24	100.0	$200,656	100.0
CYCLE II				
Districtwide	10	14.0	$132,196	21.0
Superintendencies	6	09.0	63,221	10.0
Citywide Special Education	4	06.0	37,275	06.0
Individual Schools*	50	71.0	$400,542	63.0
TOTAL	70	100.0	$633,234	100.0
CYCLE III				
Districtwide	13	34.0	$ 73,980	36.0
Superintendencies	5	12.0	47,500	23.0
Citywide Special Education	4	10.0	16,495	08.0
Individual Schools*	18	44.0	68,000	33.0
TOTAL	40	100.0	$205,970	100.0

* Individual schools included elementary, middle, and high schools.

- More than half of the total sum of funding money was granted to Cycle II programs.

Cycle I represented 18 percent of all the program sites funded and received 19 percent of the total amount of grant money. Moreover, there were no districtwide or superintendency-sponsored program activities in Cycle I. Of the 24 program sites, six (25 percent) were at special education schools and 18 (75 percent) were in individual elementary, intermediate, or secondary schools.

Cycle II and Cycle III consisted of both old and new programs sponsored by individual schools, community school districts, high school superintendencies, and schools in the citywide special education superintendency. Cycle II comprised 70 programs which received a total of $633,234, (representing 61 percent of the overall 1992-93 funding) and 52 percent of all projects funded. Cycle III had 40 projects with a total amount of funding of $205,975. Cycle III accounted for 20 percent of the total amount of grant money and 30 percent of the projects funded. In sum, a total of 110 projects were funded in Cycles II and III. This included ten district-wide programs in Cycle II and 13 in Cycle III; six high school superintendency-sponsored programs in Cycle II and five in Cycle III; four citywide special education-sponsored programs in Cycle II and four in Cycle III; and, finally, 50 individual school-sponsored programs in Cycle II and 18 in Cycle III. The latter took place in elementary, middle, and high schools sites.

SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

This report presents a portrait of about 60 PIP programs as they were implemented during the 1992-93 school year. The report identifies which specific types of parent involvement activities were most prevalent across sites; looks at the impact of funding on program sites; analyzes certain indicators of parent involvement and their impact on program effectiveness; details parents' perceptions of the program, the schools, and district conditions; and explores the effects of these features on implementation.

Chapter I provides an introduction to the report. Chapter II describes the methodology used and the questions addressed in the evaluation. Chapter III presents the 1992-93 findings. Chapter IV presents a qualitative analysis of the findings, with a summary report on site observations of selected programs. Chapter V presents OER's conclusions and recommendations to the Office of Parent Involvement.

II. METHODOLOGY

EVALUATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As in previous years, OER* was asked to evaluate the PIP project sites. For the 1992-93 school year, OER decided to evaluate both the implementation and effectiveness of the sites. The present report highlights the programs' most important characteristics; describes the content and type of programs observed, including their target populations and variations in program activities; analyzes the impact of school staff support on the development of the programs; and reports on parents' perceptions and assessment of the effectiveness of the program.

OER used four types of data collection methods to evaluate PIP projects in Cycles I, II, and III. The research methodology involved:

1. an extensive review of proposals;
2. site visits;
3. a survey of program coordinators;
4. a survey of selected parents;.
5. focus group interviews with selected program coordinators; and
6. a summary of program characteristics and budget categories from various data sources which included school and district profiles, program proposals, and program records.

---

* Formerly the Office of Educational Research (O.E.R.) was known as the Office of Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (OREA).

The evaluation was guided by the following questions:

a. What program characteristics facilitate better implementation?

b. What conditions at the site lead to better implementation?

c. To what extent and how effectively did parents participate in the program?

d. Was there sufficient support at the school and district levels for the implementation process?

e. To what extent were objectives in the pairing experiment in Cycle I attained?

f. How did the program benefit parents?

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Data in Table 2 summarizes the distribution of sites visited for the 1992-93 PIP evaluation.

Site Visits

Cycles. OER evaluators visited and observed a total of 38 program sites. Cycle I sites received eight visits (21 percent of the total), Cycle II sites had 22 visits (58 percent of the total), and Cycle III sites received eight visits (21 percent of the total).

Type of sponsors. Sites to be visited were also selected on the basis of their sponsor. Four of the sites were districtwide-sponsored projects; three were high school superintendency-sponsored projects; seven were from the citywide special education superintendency; and 24 were individual school-sponsored projects, of which 14 were in elementary schools, six were in middle schools, and four were in high schools.

Table 2

1992-93 Evaluation Sample Sites Distributed by Cycle

	Total Number	Cycle I N	Cycle I %	Cycle II N	Cycle II %	Cycle III N	Cycle III %
Site Visits	38	8	21	22	58	8	21
Focus Group	24	8	33	8	33	8	33
Coordinator Survey	90	24	27	48	53	18	20
Parent Survey	150	30	20	80	53	40	27

1992-93 Evaluation Sample Sites Distributed by Type of Sponsor

	District	Superint.	Special Ed.	Individual Schools Elem.	Middle	HS
Site Visits	4	3	7	14	6	4
Focus Group	4	2	2	11	3	2
Coordinator Survey	13	8	6	44	12	7
Parent Survey	1	1	2	7	3	1

1992-93 Evaluation Sample Sites Distributed by Borough Location

	Manhattan	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Staten Island
Site Visits	8	8	11	9	2
Focus Group	6	2	6	8	2
Coordinator Survey	17	17	27	24	5
Parent Survey	5	4	2	3	1

- About one-half of the sample were Cycle II sites.
- The majority of the sample were school-sponsored sites.
- More than half of the sample sites were located in Brooklyn and Queens.

Location. The site visit selection also reflected their borough distribution. Brooklyn and Queens had the largest number of programs funded. From the total of 38 sites selected, 11 were in Brooklyn and nine were in Queens. This represented 53 percent of the total. Eight sites were in Manhattan, eight were in the Bronx, and two were in Staten Island.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews provided an opportunity to collect complementary data from a selection of PIP coordinators whose sites OER did not visit. Each group was limited to eight participants, and the discussion lasted no more than two hours.

OER organized three focus group interviews in which eight coordinators from each Cycle participated. Eight coordinators from Cycle I participated in the first meeting. Sixteen coordinators from Cycles II and III attended the remaining two meetings. Of these 16 coordinators, four represented districtwide programs, another four represented superintendency programs, two other coordinators came from the citywide special education district, and six more represented individual school programs. Six of the program coordinators participating in the focus group interviews were from Brooklyn, eight from Queens, six from Manhattan, two from the Bronx, and two were from Staten Island.

Coordinator Survey

The selection of programs for the coordinator survey followed the same distribution criteria used in OER site visit

selection. The sample included a total of 90 programs. All of the 24 program sites in Cycle I were selected to be surveyed, which represented 27 percent of the total survey sample. Because the bulk of PIP funding was in Cycle II, 48 or 53 percent of these sites were selected. Finally, 18 Cycle III sites accounted for the remaining 20 percent of the total 90 projects selected to be surveyed. In terms of project sponsorship, the majority, 63, were individual school projects including 44 elementary, 12 middle, and seven high schools. The borough locations of the survey sites were clustered in Brooklyn and Queens with 27 and 24 sites selected, respectively.

Parent Survey

The parent population that participated in the survey came from a sub-sample of programs in the three Cycles. OER randomly selected 15 sites at which ten parents each were administered a questionnaire survey.

III. FINDINGS

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE 1992-93 PIP PROJECTS

The 1992-93 evaluation samples included 90 projects for the coordinator survey, 24 projects for the focus group interviews, 150 parents from 15 projects for the parent questionnaire administration, and 38 projects for site observations. A total of 59 projects (66 percent of the sample population) responded to the coordinator survey. Twenty-four coordinators participated in the focus group interviews, 129 parents (86 percent) responded to the questionnaire, and 28 projects were observed.

Funding

In 1992-93, the total allocation of funds for all PIP projects amounted to $1,039,860, of which $611,696 (59 percent) went to individual school projects, $316,897 (30 percent) was granted to districtwide and superintendency projects, and citywide special education projects received a total amount of $111,272 (11 percent of the funds). Data collected from the 59 coordinator surveys indicated that funds allocated ranged from $1,250 to $41,526, with an average grant award of $8,010 and a median of $7,875. The average sum actually spent was $7,553, and 24 (40.7 percent) projects were in their second year of funding (see Table 3 below).

Discussions during the OER focus group interviews revolved around the issue of the time funding was received. Many coordinators indicated that successful implementation depended on the timely availability of funds, one stated: "We received our grant in December. . . then we started in January. That was a

Table 3

Summary of Projects' Years of Funding

Years of Funding*	Number of Projects
at least 1 year	59
2 years	24
3 years	18
4 years	9
5 years	7
6 years	5

* Years of funding are not necessarily consecutive.

- Of the 59 projects responding, 24 (40.7 percent) were in their second year of funding.

little tough because I don't think that's a great time to start . . . ."

The coordinator survey data tended to support their colleagues' group interview statements on the timing of funding notification. Survey responses indicated that about one-third of the programs started around November, nearly 30 percent started between December and January, slightly more than one quarter started between February and March, and 12 percent started in April.

Attendance

Although two-thirds of the projects started late, the activities were well attended, with a range of from three to 160 parents per event. The average number of parents that attended an activity at a site was 26, and the median was 19 parents per activity. This does not include one-time special events like a multicultural fair. Attendance in the latter type of activity ranged from five to 900 parents, with a mean of 108 parents per event.

Parent Target Populations

Data from PIP proposals indicated that projects targeted different parent populations. OER's comparative analysis of proposal and coordinator survey data pinpointed some interesting changes, however, as Table 4 shows.

Table 4 indicates that there were variations in the categories of parents that attended program activities. The two categories of parents labelled "specific ethnic group" and "other" did not constitute one of the targeted populations in the evaluation samples' proposals; however, 17 percent and 14 percent, respectively, of the sample served these groups. Moreover, while "all parents" were actually targeted by more sample projects than originally planned, an increase of 27 percent of the sample, "LEP" parents were only targeted by 36 percent of the sites, rather than the proposed 48 percent (see Table 4 for additional data).

Program Characteristics

The sample population of program coordinators comprised 15 districtwide/superintendency-sponsored programs (27 percent of the sample) and 41 individual school-sponsored programs (73 percent of the sample). Moreover, 92 percent of the coordinators surveyed participated in their projects' planning. Coordinators held various positions, as indicated in Table 5.

Most coordinators were teachers (47 percent), followed by district staff (19 percent), and assistant principals and guidance counselors (12 percent each). However, only seven

Table 4*

Summary Of Planned and Actual Parent Target Populations Served by the Evaluation Sample Projects

Type of Parent Population	Number and Percent of Projects Targeting/Serving Each Population			
	Planned		Actual	
	N	%	N	%
All parents	31	53	47	80
Limited English proficiency (LEP)	28	48	21	36
Early elementary	15	25	14	24
Recent immigrants	14	24	16	27
At-Risk students	13	22	08	14
Non-working or unemployed Parents	09	15	08	14
Specific ethnic group	--	--	10	17
Other	--	--	08	14

* Data for the planned number and percentage of projects came from PIP proposals; whereas data for the actual number and percentage of parents who participated came from the OER Coordinator survey. All percentages are based on the 59 total respondents to OER's survey.

- Two new target populations were added and the percentage of sites targeting various parent groups changed from program planning to implementation.

Table 5

Evaluation Sample Coordinators' Job Titles

Job Title	Number	Percent*
Principal	4	7
Assistant Principal	7	12
Teachers	28	48
Guidance Counselor	7	12
District Staff	11	19
Missing	2	3

* Percentages in this table are based on the 59 OER survey respondents and may not total 100 due to rounding errors.

- The majority of the coordinators in the sample were teachers.

percent of the sample's coordinators held principal positions.

Events/Activities

An important feature of any parent involvement program is the type of activities implemented. These activities are crucial for the effectiveness of parent involvement in the life of a school and consequently in the educational system. Most parent involvement programs attempt to increase parent participation by developing home/school partnerships, conducting parent training, establishing community resource linkages, expanding parent outreach efforts, and/or increasing parent support services. The time schedule for these events/activities is also important.

Data from PIP proposals and coordinator surveys indicated that the number of events/activities planned ranged from two to 37, with an average of ten events/activities per project. The total number of events/activities that occurred ranged from one

to 37, with an average of eight events/activities per project. Of the 59 projects responding to the OER coordinator survey, 38 implemented 100 percent of the events/activities they planned, eight held 75 percent, and only six projects conducted less than 50 percent.

Time of activities. As mentioned previously, the time that an activity was held greatly influenced the rate of participation. Data from the coordinator surveys showed that 38 of the 59 (64 percent) projects that responded to the OER survey held activities during the day, 12 (20 percent) had afternoon sessions, 39 (66 percent) had evening activities, and 13 (22 percent) had weekend activities. Most of the programs were thus held during the day or the evening.

Discussions in OER focus groups often revolved around the issue of time. One coordinator stated,

> This year we actually had a [few] more [parents] than before. The parents have been more involved with the children. They [help] out in the school now that we opened a new pre-K. . . We have a family room so the parents are constantly involved in the program. . . We have two sessions, [one] in the morning and [one] in the afternoon. . . [Parents] are able to use our books and games for the little ones because they come with their tiny little babies. . . .

Another coordinator commented,

> We have a core group of parents that come every week. . . [when] we have a party everybody comes. . . but to come for a weekly meeting not too many show up, always the same women. These women don't work during the day, some work at night. We have a big Russian population. The Russians, I think a lot of them work during the day. They are working and that's why they don't come so much.

Types of activities. OER grouped coordinator survey responses about their project activities into six broad categories:

- home school partnership activities at 54 sites (91 percent of the survey sample;
- outreach at 53 sites (90 percent of the survey sample);
- parent training at 58 sites (98 percent of the projects surveyed);
- development of community resource linkages at 35 sites (59 percent of the projects surveyed);
- providing parent support services at 36 sites (60 percent of the projects); and
- one-day special events at 35 sites (59 percent of the projects surveyed).

Parent training activities were the most diversified and frequently implemented type of activity. There were eight types of parent training activities, ranging from family relations workshops in 49 percent of the sites to bilingual workshops in 10.2 percent of the sites. Home/school partnerships had four types of activities, including parent/child relation workshop (63 percent of programs), parent volunteering (41 percent of programs), and handbook and multicultural workshops (36 percent and 31 percent of programs, respectively). Interestingly, 60 percent of the programs offered support services activities. Child care was the most frequent type of support (37 percent of programs) followed by transportation (25 percent of programs), and parent networking (22 percent of programs).

Table 6

Types of Activities Implemented at the Sample Sites

Type of Activities	Number of Sites	Percentage of Sites (N=59)
HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP:		
Parent/child relation	37	63
Parent Volunteering	24	41
Handbook	21	36
Multicultural Workshops	18	31
OUTREACH:		
Newsletter	36	61
Translation	27	46
Open House	18	31
Hotline	17	29
PARENT TRAINING:		
Family Relations Workshop	29	49
Home Education Workshop	26	44
ESL Workshop	25	42
Community Health	21	36
Literacy Workshop	18	31
Continuing Education	13	22
Parent Leadership	10	17
Bilingual Workshop	6	10
DEVELOPING RESOURCES:		
Parent Room or Resource Center	26	44
Lending Library	17	29
Community Resources Workshop	12	20
SUPPORT SERVICES:		
Child Care	22	37
Transportation	15	25
Parent Support Network	13	22
SPECIAL/ONE DAY EVENT	35	59

- Nearly two-thirds of the sites held home/school partnership and outreach activities.

Support

Previous OER evaluations have shown that the amount of support that a program receives from parents, school staff, and other site members affects the development and effectiveness of the project. In particular, the support of the principal or the district superintendent is an important element for the successful project implementation. Coordinator survey responses regarding significant program implementation support to the sample sites indicated that: 51 projects received support from parents and school staff, 22 projects received support from district staff, and 13 projects each received support from the Board of Education and outside agencies.

Indicators of Success

Data from the coordinators survey indicated that of the 59 projects that responded:

- 56 (95 percent) attributed their projects' success to the prior related work experience of the coordinator;
- 55 (93 percent) indicated that the program met parents' needs;
- 50 (85 percent) stated that the principal's support was the determinant;
- 49 (83 percent) mentioned the parent outreach/communication methods;
- 45 (76 percent) said parent participation;
- 43 (73 percent) indicated school support;
- 42 (71 percent) attributed success to the needs assessment done before the project began;
- 40 (68 percent) to incentives to parents;
- 39 (66 percent) to funding;
- 37 (62 percent) mentioned the role of the PA/PTA; and

- 36 (61 percent) attributed their success to making translation services available.

Thus, for the majority of the programs the experience of the coordinator, the adaptation of the program to parents' needs, and the principal's support were the most important factors for successful project implementation and outcomes. Interestingly, the amount of funding was not mentioned as one of the primary causes of project success.

Implementation Obstacles

During OER focus group interviews the 18 PIP coordinators also made comments and suggestions about the obstacles they faced in the implementation of their projects. For most coordinators, the most important obstacles were related to the following five issues:

- funding, in particular the use of their own monies and the late receipt of money;
- budgeting, especially the lack of training and information about budgeting procedures;
- a sense of isolation, because of a lack of consistent contact with other coordinators;
- the timing of the grant award notification because not knowing if the program would continue created a sense of insecurity; and
- the need to eliminate some of the bureaucratic paperwork.

Many coordinators strongly voiced these budget concerns. One coordinator commented, "It is very cumbersome to lay out $150 from your pocket. I don't have that kind of money. Why can't they give [us] some petty cash and then [we could] submit the receipts afterwards?" Another coordinator added, "I don't think that's my role either, as an educator, to lay out the money. Let the principal [do it]."

PIP coordinators also pinpointed their lack of information about budget procedures. One of them stated:

> Along the lines of funding, I had a very hard time figuring out how the grant was [to be] used. No one ever showed me how to use the grant.

Another commented:

> The other problem that I have is that no one showed me how to read the grant. . . I just thought we had $8,000 in a pot, and you just take from there. . . [if] you needed this, you used it. But [the reality is] you have this much to spend on this and that's all you get from that item. So if you're going to spend more than that, you cannot. I did not know that.

Discussions on funding were at times linked to the issues of uncertainty regarding project renewal. One coordinator noted:

> I think. . . [OPI's] funding [policies] works backwards. It seems to me that if programs are running successfully they should be encouraged by either keeping the funding the same or even increasing it. . . . the new programs can start [with] smaller [grants] and build [up].

Many coordinators also suggested that O.P.I receive grant proposals by the end of June so that awards could be made in early September.

Although the issue of funding was continuously invoked as part of the obstacles to success, one coordinator was able to put the issue of funding into a broader perspective. As she stated:

> It is interesting when you talk about the PIP funding. It is not a lot of funding. . . but it becomes a seed. It is a seed to create ideas, to get ideas flowing. . . [We all understand] that PIP money does not [and cannot] stand alone. But it is that seed that gets things moving.

Another area of concern was the sense of isolation felt by most coordinators. At the end of each OER focus group

coordinators expressed an overwhelming sense of having shared experiences. One of them remarked:

> I think the sharing we did today was beneficial. I got a lot of ideas. . . I think. . . we should do more of [it].

Another stated:

> I certainly feel a lot better after today because we work in a vacuum and now that I know that how 25 [parents participating] in a program is great and that having trouble getting the population into [project activities] is not solely mine. . . I really feel good. . . we came pretty far this year.

This sense of sharing, of having established a network, initiated even more positive remarks from some coordinators about PIP, as the following two statements illustrate:

> I see the growth of the parents. I cannot believe it when I hear these parents speak now. They did not feel they had anything to offer. Because they can't [could not] read or write they felt they had no right to open their mouths. But now, I think they see they [parents] have something to offer and something to say, they can be educators.

> Everybody wants to measure something that is very intangible at times [but] is necessary and effective. How do you measure a smile? Where are we going as educators and as parents? Those are the things [we] began to talk about. How do you measure collaboration between parents? The fact that I am sitting here representing 187 children from a new school located in a provincial type of district says a lot. It says a lot that these parents are now saying to me, "We want a 7th grade" and I do not think that the [parents] are going to accept that the [administration] simply says no. That [means] being empowered, how do you measure that?

CYCLE I PAIRING EXPERIMENT FINDINGS

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, Cycle I objectives were to replicate successful programs in new sites with a population that had similar needs and concerns. Of the 11 Cycle I projects that received the OER coordinator survey, only eight responded. However, an additional eight Cycle I

coordinators participated in a focus group interview. (The following assessment of Cycle I projects comes mostly from the focus group discussion.)

Most of the programs that were replicated in the pairing experiment had been involved in implementing parent involvement for more than three years. Indeed, one of the projects had existed for more than five years. Most programs were located in areas with a very large immigrant population. Thus, in many of the pairing experiments the bulk of the project activities involved training parents and increasing home/school partnerships. OER focus group discussions designed to assess the contributions and effectiveness of the experiment revealed many different points of view. The statements and comments below reflect coordinators' assessments of three of the paired projects.

Project A

First Coordinator:

> We started as P.A.C.T (Teaching Parents and Children) because [in] our neighborhood we have a variety of cultures . . . . What we had tried is to make the school a community where [parents] could actually learn from it. So we started as an ESL. . . . This year we opened up the school to children who are lacking certain things; for instance, the parents actually needed to learn how to help the children with homework. . . . [Our] program depends on the needs of the parent and the children and the years that we have taught. We had [been running] the program [for] five years. Every year is a different experience. We share ideas with the pairing programs but we have a completely different type of background, because the neighborhood of the pairing program is really Russian and our side is Asian and Indonesian. We had a science workshop and we have been trying to [work] with our pairing program but [find] it very hard because the ethnic background is completely different.

Second coordinator:

We are the sister of [the previous] program. This is the first year that we started PACT. It has been fairly successful. We have a core group of parents that come every week. . . . We have a big Russian population, followed by an Hispanic one. Our focus is mostly ESL.

Program B

For this program only one coordinator was present at the beginning of the interview. This is a summary of her various comments:

I am from a city high school, and the kids come to us from all parts of the city so it is hard for us to get parents. We are in our second year. We had a very strong ESL. We have a lot of kids from the Dominican Republic and the parents come at night. We had a counselor do a class with them. It was a huge class. They discussed AIDS, depression, violence, college information. This year the Hispanic kids graduated and we have more Chinese kids in the school. I am an ESL teacher so we continued this year with ESL classes. The guidance counselor [worked] with the Hispanic kids and parents continued to learn about the same subjects. So [in total] we had four support classes, [including] a word processing workshop in the computer room. . . . I would like to expand the ESL program next year into word processing and literacy for parents.

Regarding the pairing experiment the same coordinator added:

I don't know anything about [the pairing school]. I know that they have a lot of parent groups there. I know that [it] had a lot of meetings because they met on the first floor and we shared the building.

Program C

First Coordinator:

Well, in my school, my principal first got the flier about writing a [PIP proposal]. [This] was put in my box because I am the parent developer. I just took it from there and I asked to talk to the parents to find out what their needs were and that is how we basically started. We had already an ESL in place and then with the PIP [grant] we added a literacy component. . . ESL was not addressing every single parent's needs. We have a beginner ESL and something like an intermediate. . . We needed a next step where [parents] could really learn to read and write. . . .

Second Coordinator:

I discovered [first coordinator's] wonderful program and was able to replicate it. So it worked for both of our populations because they are similar.

First Coordinator:

In fact, we both happened to live in the same neighborhood so we can meet and we talk.

Additional discussion revealed that the selection of the pairing school also varied. At least in two cases, the principal of the school that had PIP experience made the choice, as revealed in this comment by one coordinator: "[My principal] wrote the grant proposal with the previous principal of my sister school." And another coordinator stated: " My principal wrote the grant. The principal also choose the neighboring school. We are at two opposite sides of the district. . . Not close together at all. . . . We also have dissimilar populations."

In other cases, it was the school parent developer, as in program C, or the coordinator of the older program who did the pairing. A case in point is the following statement by a coordinator: "I wrote the grant for our school and [an OPI staff member] called me and asked me if I could find a similar school that I could be paired with. I picked [this school] because it is [located] in the same immediate neighborhood and it has the same [Hispanic] population. . . ."

Because of limited data it was difficult to fully assess the outcomes of the Cycle I pairing experiment, but from the OER focus group discussions it seems clear that the objectives were not well defined. In addition, site selection for pairing appeared to some extent to be arbitrary.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENT EVALUATION SAMPLE

During site visits OER evaluators administered a total of 129 parent surveys. These data indicated that most (81 percent) of the parents were women. Findings also showed that 98 parents (76 percent) were above 30 years of age, 103 (80 percent) had finished grade school, and about 53 percent were employed. Ninety-eight (75.9 percent) of the respondents had children in elementary and middle schools, while only 17 percent of the parents interviewed had children in high school. A minority of parents, (around 8 percent) had children enrolled in the citywide special education district. Fifty-two (40.5 percent) of the parents earned less than $10,000 yearly while 20 (15.5 percent) earned more than $40,000.

Although many of the programs targeted immigrant parents and parents with limited English proficiency, data on parents' ethnicity (Table 7 below) showed that more than 50 percent of the parents in the evaluation sample were English speakers. This might explain why less than half of the projects surveyed indicated that the availability of translation services was an important success factor.

PIP's IMPACT ON PARENTS

School Visits

In order to assess the impact of the program on parent involvement, OER evaluators looked at some indicators that reflect parents' presence in the school. Two questions from the parent questionnaire asked, " How many times did you visit the

Table 7
Distribution of Parents by Language and Ethnicity
(N=129)

Language	Frequency (%)
English	62.4
Spanish	14.0
Urdu	8.0
Chinese	2.0
Bilingual	14.0
Ethnic Identity	
Black	33.0%
Latino	47.0
White	8.0
Asian	3.0
Other	9.0

- Nearly two-thirds of the parents surveyed indicated that they spoke English.

school?", and "What were the reasons for the visit?" A little more than 9 percent of the parents indicated that the visited the school one or two times during a term, 46 percent visited the school three to ten times, and 44.5 percent came to the school more than ten times. Responses to the second question are displayed in Table 8.

Well over one-half of the parents visited their children's school voluntarily or because they wanted to participate in some school activity, yet four out of every ten parents were asked to report to the school. In order to determine the causes relating to parents' school visits another survey question asked if parents felt comfortable coming to the schools. Of the 123 parents responding to this question, 100 (81.3 percent) responded that they felt comfortable, while the remaining 23 (18.7 percent) said they did not.

Table 8

Summary of Sample Parents' Reasons for School Visits
[N=129]

Reasons	% of Parents*
Visits were voluntary	58.1
To participate in school activities	53.5
To accompany their children	42.6
At school's request	40.3

* Some parents indicated more than one reason for visiting their child's school; therefore percentages do total 100.

- Nearly 60 percent of the parents' school visits were voluntary.

Help from Program

Eighty percent of the parents surveyed indicated that they received help from PIP, and about 66 percent mentioned that they were consulted when the program was created. The various ways that the program helped parents are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Summary of the Types of Help Sample Parents Received from PIP

Types of Help	% of Parents
Parenting	64.0
Children's homework	60.5
Information on parents rights	53.5
Home education	43.0
Learn about other culture	43.0
Leadership training	42.0
Occupational skills	38.0

- About two-thirds of the parents received help developing their homework assistance and parenting skills.

Types of Parent Involvement

Fifty-seven percent of the parents said that they were involved with their children's educational life before PIP, and 66 percent of the parents claimed that they participated more after the development of the program. This represented a nine percent increase in parent involvement. Table 10 displays the types of activities in which parents were involved.

Table 10

Summary of Sample Parents' PIP Activities

Activities	% of Parents*
PA/PTA	45.0
School volunteer	36.4
Taking courses	31.0
Member of a school committee	12.0
Came to work	8.0
Doing translation	5.4
Working on newsletter	4.0

* Parents could participate in more than one activity, therefore percentages total more than 100.

- Participation in PA/PTA was the most common activity.

As the data in Table 10 indicate, most parents participated in activities involving parent organizations. Parents also tended to use school-based training programs. Moreover, in response to a survey question asking parents what they wanted from PIP, 96 percent said they wanted more diversified activities.

IV. OER SITE VISIT OBSERVATIONS

In order to have a broader understanding of PIP projects during the 1992-93 school year, OER evaluators made site visit observations of a selected number of programs. Twenty-eight visits were conducted at 21 sites, including two district-sponsored programs. In some cases, more than one evaluator visited a particular site. Table 11, below, is a summary of the various types of sites visited and the activities observed. These activities fell into three general categories: home/school partnerships, parent training, and support services/resource development.

HOME/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Family Relations Workshops

More than three-quarters of all sample sites surveyed offered workshops in family relations. As indicated in Table 11, evaluators visited five school-sponsored sites (E, I, J, T, and U) which conducted this activity.

For example, one high school (Site E) held a two-part workshop on "Peers, Drugs, and Violence" which focused on helping parents deal with teen and pre-teen social issues. This topic was requested by the parents. Attendees included about 30 women and only one male*. The OER evaluator found the session to be well-organized and translation was available in both Spanish and English. The OER evaluator observed that the workshop

*Such a gender gap was common at the sites visited, where the ratio of female to male participants was about ten to one.

Table 11

1992-93 Parent Involvement Program
Summary of Evaluation Sample Site Visits

Site Code	Site Type	Number of Visits	Number Attending	Activities Observed
A	Library	1	8	College Financial Aid workshop
B	H. S.	2	39	Workshop: How Students Can Apply to College
C	P.S.	2	14	Parent-Child Activity Workshop: "Play time is Science"
D	District	2	11	Parent Leadership Training session
E	H.S.	1	30	Workshop: "Peers, Drugs, and Violence"
F	District	2	40	Workshop: "Fun with Cooking"
G	P.S.	1	10	ESL math lab for parents
H	P.S.	1	24	Computer Class and Read aloud activity
I	P.S.	1	6	Stress Management; child care provided
J	P.S.	1	5	Workshop: "Behavior Management at Home"
K	CS	1	11	Workshop: "Language, Reading, Testing"
L	P.S.	1	15	Bookmaking workshop
M	P.S.	2	30	Parent/Child Activities: lead poisoning, sibling rivalry, self-esteem, learning games, multi-cultural education, etc.
N	I.S.	1	47	AIDS workshop
O	I.S.	1	7	Weekly ESL classes
P	H.S.	1	10	ESL and computers
Q	P.S.	2	34	Parents' library program
R	P.S.	2	20	Outreach program workshop: "Family/School Reading Program"
S	I.S.	1	7	Workshop: "Sex Education and our Teenagers"
T	I.S.	1	5	Workshop for parents and staff: "Promoting Harmony"
U	Library	1	0	College Financial Aid workshop

- A total of 28 visits were made to 21 sites.
- Of the 21 sites visited only six (29 percent) had 30 or more people in attendance.

presenters stimulated parents to interact among themselves. In fact, the participants were attentive during the entire event and seemed comfortable communicating their feelings to the group.

Parents reported that they genuinely profited from the parent training workshops. One grandmother commented,

> It helps a lot. When my kids went to school, we didn't have these things. Now it is different. If it weren't for the workshops, I'd be lost. When my ten-year-old asks me about the new math, I would say, "What is going on with this stuff?" This way I am able to help him.

Other parents also stated that they participated in this workshop because it helped them help their children with school issues. As one participant put it: "If you don't know what's going on in the school, what can you do [to help your child]?"

A family relations workshop at Site I was on stress management, and was geared toward parents of emotionally disturbed children. Five people attended. The Kingsborough Community College professor who led the workshop was able to engage parents in the session, and encouraged them to play an active role in their children's school. Four of the five parents seemed to be very interested in the issues discussed.

The parents had only good things to say about the PIP activities organized at this site. As one mother put it: "It helps me deal with the situation. It helps me get to the school. I'd like to go on trips. It's wonderful that they offer these things."

According to this sites' PIP coordinator, a key ingredient of parent participation at these weekly workshops was that the topics were selected according to the parents' needs. This

coordinator also added that all of their PIP events were planned by a team that included about five parents.

Workshops on family relations were not always successful, as an OER site visit to an intermediate school (Site T) revealed. In this instance, the event was a daytime workshop held in the school library and led by an outside consultant. The topic was "Promoting Harmony." The program began late. Of the 30 participants, only three were parents; the rest were school staff. The participants seemed very satisfied with the workshop, although the OER evaluator felt that the session was more like a staff development meeting than a parent activity.

At another intermediate school (Site S) the workshop was a lecture titled "Sex Education and Our Teenagers." Five of the participants told the evaluator the ways in which PIP helped them feel more at home in the school. One parent stated, "me ayuda a sentirme mas en casa" [I feel at home]. However, the evaluator noticed that the workshop was given by a seventh grade teacher who mostly used a lecture format. Moreover, the majority of the session was conducted in English, even though three parents only spoke Spanish. The teacher tried to translate, but the translation was brief and limited.

Parent/Child Workshops

Two of the program sites visited (C,and M) offered parent/child workshops which, like the workshops on family relations, promoted a partnership between home and school. The program at Site C, called "Playtime is Science," was part of a

workshop held on four Saturday afternoons at this Chapter I elementary school. The evaluator made two visits to this site. The aim of the workshop was to have parents and children learn together in a non-threatening atmosphere by using interactive lessons about science. Fourteen parents attended, seven of whom were men. The entire event emphasized interactive learning through extremely well-conceived and enjoyable activities. Parents comments confirmed that this PIP project was very popular. The Saturday schedule allowed a relaxed atmosphere free from distractions. Virtually all the parents either praised the workshop or voiced the desire to have more like it. As the evaluator reported, at the end of the event, a great number of "Thank you's" were extended to the presenters.

PARENT TRAINING ACTIVITIES

While activities linked to home/school partnerships tended to focus on developing parenting skills, parent training activities aimed to enhance the academic and occupational skills of parents. OER researchers visited five workshops offering parent training (at Sites G, H, K, O, and P). English proficiency training comprised the core of these workshops. As was the case with other sites visited by OER, the workshops seemed to attract a small, consistent group of female parents who were all from the same ethnic backgrounds.

The OER evaluator noticed a lot of interaction among participants at Site G, and the three school staff members who coordinated this lab workshop gave a good deal of individual

attention to each parent. One of the staff members commented that "This PIP program plays an important role in the school because it reaches out to those parents whose needs are the greatest. It has achieved its primary goal--that of increasing the basic skills of adult learners." This, in turn, the staff concluded, helped the students. Parents in this workshop were extremely thankful for the opportunity of learning English. Many made the connection between acquiring language skills and improving their ability to help with their child's education. Parents also commented that they felt more confident talking with the school's administration, and were also able to get to know the school staff better. These comments were repeated at all three sites visited.

Continuing education and related workshops were also part of parent training activities. Three of the sites (G, H, and P) that offered ESL also held math and computer workshops.

One of the most popular PIP events that OER evaluators visited was a workshop titled "Fun with Cooking" that was held at Site F. The event was part of a districtwide-sponsored program and was designed for parents of first and second graders who exhibited poor reading skills. There were 40 participants--including eight males--who came with their children. A very skilled presenter used food and cooking as a way to show the parents how they could foster language and concept development in their home. Parents felt welcome at the school, enjoyed the session, and voiced excitement about the three free books they were given.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Parent Support Workshops

Of the 28 sites visited, at least ten (A, B, C, D, F, L, N, Q, R, and U) held parent support and resource development activities. Some covered topics closely related to parent training, while others concentrated on informing parents of resources available at the school or in the community at large.

At Site N, for example, a workshop on AIDS was presented by a teacher and translated into Spanish by a coordinator. A total of 47 people attended, including 32 parents. The teacher, a medical student from Cornell University, responded to questions at any time during the presentation. The evaluator observed that the parents were very enthusiastic about the workshop.

At another school where project implementation had been very successful (Site C), the main focus was parent outreach activities. The OER evaluator noted that outreach workers (one for each of the language communities in this school's neighborhood) were a great asset to the project because the outreach workers: (1) spoke the same languages as the project parents, (2) lived in the neighborhood, which helped them make countless informal contacts, and (3) were parents who shared many of the same concerns as the project parents. OER's evaluator indicated that these characteristics seemed to provide a sense of accessibility to the parents. They felt comfortable enough to ask questions and to make requests. In addition, the principal in this school spoke very positively about the program and how well it was integrated into the dynamics of the school.

Three of the sites visited (A, B, and U) scheduled informational workshops on financial aid and college-related issues. Sites A and B were successful in terms of participation and the usefulness of the information for the parents. For example, 39 people attended the workshop at Site B, which was well organized and seemed of great importance to the participants. By contrast, the workshop at Site U did not even take place because no parents attended.

Site D was a districtwide project, whose goal was to train parents for a leadership role. Trained parents were then supposed to use their new skills in their respective school. Fifteen parents were involved in the program, and 11 were present on the day of the observation. The OER evaluator noted that the parents were very attentive, were constantly providing feedback to the presenter, and were actively taking notes. The coordinator indicated that the parents' dedication was such that they came to sessions in the worst weather conditions.

Evaluators also visited a workshop on bookmaking (Site L) and a special "Read Aloud" workshop. Both were attended by parents and their children, and were conducted by two very dynamic coordinators who seemed to have a good rapport with the parents. The workshop climate was one in which the parents seemed to be very comfortable, and everyone, including the coordinators, were highly committed.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

In New York City, the BOE's Parent Involvement Program (PIP) has operated successfully since 1987. Six years of implementation have helped increase the rate of participation of parents/families in the education of their children, and helped empower parents to more readily voice their concerns and to inform the schools of their needs.

For the 1992-93 school year, a total of $1,039,865 was distributed to 134 sites grouped into three cycles. Cycle I was a pilot program which consisted of a pairing of previously funded and new projects. Cycle II and Cycle III consisted of both old and new projects sponsored by individual schools, districts, and high school superintendencies. OER visited 21 project sites, received 59 coordinators' OER surveys, interviewed 24 program coordinators, and surveyed 150 parent participants. Data from these sources indicated that although two-thirds of the sample projects started late, the activities were well attended, with a range of from three to 160 parents per event. Most projects were conducted by experienced coordinators who almost always (92 percent of the coordinators surveyed) participated in program planning.

Six broad categories of parent involvement activities were implemented at the various evaluation sites, with parent training activities being most dominant. A majority (60 percent) of the projects offered support services with child care as the most

frequent type of support. Most of the activities occurred during the mornings before noon, and/or in the evenings.

Parent survey data indicated that PIP increased parents' level of visits to their children's schools and their participation in school-related parent organizations and volunteer activities. A majority of parents stated that the program provided numerous types of assistance to them including parenting and homework assistance skills development.

According to coordinator survey and focus group data, elements that led to successful program implementation included:

- the coordinator's prior related work-experience,
- having their principal's or superintendent's support,
- having supportive parent organizations, school staff, and other site constituent groups,
- using outreach workers who had the same ethnic/linguistic backgrounds, and were also parents, and
- the adaptation of the project to parents' needs.

On the other hand, coordinators' program implementation problems generally were related to:

- funding and budgeting, especially the lack of training and information about budgeting procedures;
- a sense of isolation, because of a lack of consistent contact with other coordinators;
- the timing of the grant award notification, because not knowing if the program would continue created a sense of insecurity;
- the need to eliminate some of the bureaucratic paper work;
- the need to start the program earlier in the school year; and
- the untimely release of program funds, which necessitated out-of-pocket spending.

In addition, Cycle I coordinators' focus group data indicated that some of the paired projects did not appear to have similar populations, needs, and concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings OER recommends that the Office of Parent Involvement:

- continue to implement the traditional PIP model as reflected in the 1992-93 Cycle I and II projects;
- revise the paired projects model to include verification of the similarity of parent populations, concerns, and needs just prior to project implementation;
- explore the possibility of releasing program funds in a more flexible manner and timely fashion;
- develop a mechanism where specific project coordinators can meet with a small group of their colleagues on an on-going basis to discuss implementation issues;
- work with OER to develop an assessment of parent and school-based participants' perceptions of the benefits and the impact of PIP; and
- work with OER to develop an evaluation of the educational impact of PIP on the New York City Board of Education's schools.

REFERENCES

Center on Families 1990 Statement in J. Epstein et al. Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork. A Manual for Teachers. Center on Families, John Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 1990.

Comer, J. "Educating Poor Minority Children" in Scientific American Vol 259, 5, Nov 1988, pp.42-48.

Davies. Don "Policies to Increase Family-Community Involvement" in Equity and Choice Vol 8, 3, Spring 1992, pp.48-51.

Davies, D. "Schools Reaching Out: Family School, and Community Partnerships for Student Success" in KAPPAN Vol 72, 5, Jan 1991, pp.376-80.

"Poor Parents, Teachers, and the Schools: Comments about Practice, Policy, and Research" Manuscript. San Francisco, March 1989.

Epstein, J. "A Reply" in Michelle Fine ed. "A Parent Involvement" Special Issue, Teacher College Review, 1993.

"Paths to Partnership: What We Can Learn from Federal, State, District, and School Initiatives" in KAPPAN Vol 72, 5, Jan 1991, pp.344-49.

"Parent Involvement: What Research Says to Administrators" in Education and Urban Society Vol 19, 2, Feb 1987, pp.119-36.

Fine, Michelle. " A Parent Involvement" Equity and Choice, Vol 9, 3, Spring 1993, pp.4-8.

Hoover-Dempsey, K. "Explorations in Parent-School Relations" in Journal of Educational Research, Vol 85, 5, May-June 1992, pp. 287-94.

KAPPAN, Special Issue "Reassessing A Nation at Risk", Vol 74, No. 8, April 1993.

Seeley, D. "A New Paradigm for Parent Involvement" in Educational Leadership Vol 47, 2, Oct 1989, pp.46-48.